

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 STR-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 COME-00 L-03 /049 W

-----033396 091453Z /43

P 091425Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 901

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 1011

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: EEWT SHUM HU US

SUBJECT: U.S.-HUNGARIAN TRADE AGREEMENT - PRESS TREATMENT

1. WHEN CHARGE CALLED ON BARTHA MAR 9, ON A RELATED SUBJECT REPORTED IN SEPTEL, BARTHA ASKED HIM TO SEEK INFORMATION FROM THE DEPARTMENT ON THE EXACT WORDING OF THE DEPARTMENT PRESS SPOKESMAN'S REPLIES TO QUESTIONS HE RECEIVED ON THE TRADE AGREEMENT AND THE QUESTION OF EMIGRATION ASSURANCES.

2. BARTHA'S REQUEST WAS PROMPTED BY A STORY FILED OUT OF WASHINGTON BY THE HUNGARIAN PRESS AGENCY MTI. ACCORDING TO THE MTI STORY, BARRY SCHWEID OF THE AP FILED A STORY ON MAR 5 WHICH INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

"HUNGARY HAS A RESTRICTIVE EMIGRATION POLICY. NEVERTHE-
LESS, THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, L. FRANK, SAID
HUNGARY GAVE ASSURANCES TO THE U.S. THAT THE KADAR GOVERN-
MENT WILL RESPECT THE AMERICAN CONDITIONS LINKING
THE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH EMIGRATION."

3. BARTHA EXPLAINED THAT FONMIN PUJA HAD REQUESTED HIM TO
SEEK A CLARIFICATION. IF THE DEPARTMENT'S PRESS
SPOKESMAN ACTUALLY SAID WHAT AP CLAIMED HE SAID,
INSTEAD OF FOLLOWING THE PRESS GUIDANCE WHICH WAS
PREPARED, AND WHICH WAS QUITE CORRECT IN BARTHA'S
VIEW, THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD BE "SURPRISED
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AND DISTURBED." IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, THE AP
STORY WAS AN INTERPRETATION OF WHAT THE DEPARTMENT'S
SPOKESMAN SAID, THE HUNGARIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD DIS-
MISS IT AS A STORY WHICH DID NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT
THE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION.

4. WE BELIEVE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF REPLYING TO

BARTHA WOULD BE TO GIVE HIM THE ACTUAL TEXT OF THE
DEPARTMENT'S SPOKESMAN'S REMARKS. REQUEST THE
DEPARTMENT FORWARD SOONEST.

5. BARTHA VOLUNTEERED THAT FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW
JOHN GOSHKO'S STORY IN THE WASHINGTON POST ON MAR 4,
WAS A FAIR AND ACCURATE STORY.
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